Chapter III

Conceptual Framework & Literature Review

- Concept of Development
- Concept of Tribes
- Types of Tribes
- Concept of Forest Economy
- Concept of Tribal Development
- Literature Review
Conceptual Frame Work and Literature Review

It is imperative here to define and elaborate some of the concepts which we are going to discuss in the subsequent chapters. As we are going to discuss the 'Impact of Forest Economy on the Socio-Economic Development of Tribe', the concept of 'forest economy', 'development', 'tribal development' and the concept of 'tribe' are very important. Moreover, these concepts are still evolving and have different connotation in different branches of social sciences research. So in this chapter an attempt has been made to define and elaborate some of the important concepts.

Concept of Development

More than any things, what has attracted the contemporary social sciences researches in these days is the dominant philosophy of 'development' which has assumed remarkable importance in the developing and under developing countries in the early sixties of the 20th century. Development' is a broad concept and its relevance has been increasingly recognized since the late 1960's.
Social science researchers have defined the concept of 'development' in various ways. Researchers in Geography, Sociology, Economics, Anthropology and Public Administration have discussed this concept at greater length.

In the early fifties of the 20th century U.N experts have identified development with the level of per capita real income. Thus an under developed country is one "in which the per capita income is low when compared with the per capita real income of the U.S.A, Canada, Australia and Western Europe". In the same period, however, Indian Planning Commission has defined 'under developed countries' as one "which is characterized by the co-existence in greater or lesser degree of unutilized or underutilized manpower on one hand and of unexploited natural resources on the other".

According to Jan Drewnowski (1966) "development is a process of qualitative change and quantitative growth of the social and economic reality which we can call either society or economy. Because of the inter-relation of economic and social elements no purely social or purely economic development is possible. Consequently it is better not to speak of social development separately. It is a single process which is best called simply development". George Fedrick (1978) has defined 'development'
"as a balance process of self-reliance, economic growth and social justice in order to guarantee the basic needs (nutrition, clothing, housing, health, education and political freedom, participation, togetherness and creativity) and their satisfaction in achieving self-reliance, balance sectoral development and high degree of dissociation from the international markets." From the above two definitions of 'development' it can be infer that improvement in quality of life and quantitative growth of various values are two most important indicator of socio-economic development and in the same way quality of life can be improved by improving the conditions of health, nutrition, education, transport and communication and so on. Development is a value loaded word implying change that is desirable but there is no consensus to its meaning. What constitutes development depends on what social goals are being allocated by the development agency, government, planners and executives. Whatever the concept of development is defined, it is certain that what we in 20th century think about development, is fast reaching a dead end. Development can be taken as a vector of desirable social objectives, i.e. it is a list of attributes which a society seeks to achieves or maximize. The element of these vectors may include increase in per capita real income, improvement in health and nutrition status, educational achievement,
access to resources, a ‘fairer distribution’ of resources and increase in basic freedom.\(^6\)

In its broader sense the term ‘development’ signifies all aspects of development that is of a collective nature, that is to say, pertaining to society as a whole. In a narrower sense, it has been used either with reference to the human welfare aspects of development, or in connection with structural transformation in the society.\(^7\)

In the words of Rao (1984) “in the literature on development, the term development has been widely used. But the conceptual frame work and precise quantification of the term ‘development’ bristle with complications. In fact there is no clear or agreed definition of ‘development’”.\(^8\)

Later on it was also envisaged by the first Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990, the UNDP stressed that “the real wealth of a country is its people and the purpose of development is to create an enabling environment for them to enjoy long, creative and healthy lives”.\(^9\)

In geographers view Johnston and others prominent contemporary geographers state that development is “a process of becoming and a state of being. The achievement of a state of development would enable people
in societies to make their own histories and geographies under conditions of their own choosing. The process of development is the means by which such conditions of human existence might be achieved.”

They further claimed that “by these standards, no society in history has ever achieved a state of development, and it may be argued that no society has ever engaged in a process of development”.

Though there are many definitions of development and strategies of development vary from country to country, for the sake of simplicity, economists use the per capita real income as the measure of economic development. From the anthropological viewpoint, it is a useful method as it deals with the micro processes that provide important insights into the changing human condition.

In the Indian situation, Gandhiji’s concept of development provides an exquisite guideline for the development. Gandhiji’s views on ‘development’ are as follows:

“Development means the development of man in his entirety, making him aware of himself as part of the development process, raising the standard of his living and life and giving his freedom not only from foreign domination but also from economic exploitation, economic indebtedness
and intellectual servitude. It is the process of growth of man, gaining in self confidence and becoming self-reliant and self-sufficient.”\textsuperscript{13}

The attainment of self sufficiency, self reliance and self confidence are the major aspects of philosophy of development of Gandhiji.

As a revolutionary concept, development focuses on “the process of enlarging the range of people choices - increasing their opportunities for education, health care, income and employment and covering the full range of human choices from a sound physical environment to economic and political freedom.”\textsuperscript{14} The U.N experts defined the concept of development “as a process of improving the capability of a country’s institution and value system to meet the increasing and different demands of a social, cultural political as well as an economic character.”\textsuperscript{15}

Social development and social planning can be considered to be concerned with deliberate institution or promotion of societal change and with modernization of institution, as well as the allocations of resources necessary for sectoral social programmes.\textsuperscript{16}

As per these definitions; ‘development’ means the capability in the capacity of a political system to meet the demands in social, economic and cultural realms.
Edward Weidner (1997) has outlined three dimensions of development. First of all he has made a general distinction between change in output of a system and change in the system itself. Changes in the output of a system that are in the direction of greater quantity are frequently labeled ‘growth’ and those that are in the reverse direction ‘lack of growth’ or decline. Secondly, distinctions have been drawn among the different goals or outputs of an administrative system. Thirdly, it is commonly understood that those engaged in development work are consciously trying to bring about change in particular direction.

Jose George and Sreekumar (1993), while summarizing the concept of development has drawn the following inferences:

- Development is a process of generating self sustained growth of a community.
- Development means the development of man in his totality on the basis of the satisfaction of his basic needs;
- It also means making one aware of himself, self reliant and self respecting and giving freedom from exploitation;
- It involves active participation of the people in the process of making social, political and economic decisions; and
It also requires action for preparing a planned programme of development which can be implemented effectively by the available instruments of administration.

In spite of the fact that a step has been taken into evolving the concept of development, there are many questions which we have to address for evolving a practical approach for development. Some of these include:

- How can we encourage people to develop their own visions of development and move more effectively towards them?
- How can we induce people and institutions to think in terms of long-range future and not just in terms of short term selfish interests?
- How can we judge whether new technologies are socially useful and use of those judgments to shape our society?
- How can we make quality of life, rather than open-ended economic growth, the focus of development?

Like these there can be many more other such questions that we will have to take care of before preparing the blueprints of planning for development.
Concept of Tribes

At one stage Anthropology was considered as science of study of primitive societies. Gradually, the anthropologists have broadened their sphere. And thus tribals are now, not the exclusive domain of anthropologists, but they are concerned of all conscientious people, social workers and voluntary organizations. Various researchers and writers have their own specific views as far as the definition of ‘tribe’ is concerned. The paradoxical thing regarding the definition of tribe is that some tribal groups are so big that their numerical strength exceeds millions while some groups are so small that they are represented by merely few hundreds and even less than. In such situations, what criteria should be adopted to define the term ‘tribe’?

According to Elizabeth E. Bacon(2002)\textsuperscript{19} “tribe is derived from the Latin word \textit{tribus} meaning ‘one third’ which originally referred to one of the three people who united to form Rome.”

Anthropologists, Sociologists, Geographers, Economists and Administrators differ in their approach to the problem of defining the term. According to Oxford Dictionary, a tribe is “a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority
of a chief and usually regarding themselves or having a common ancestor.” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary defined ‘tribes’ as “a social group with a definite territory, unifying social organization and cultural homogeneity having a common ancestor, chief, patron deity and the like.”

In the dictionary of Anthropology a tribe is defined as a social group, usually with definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization. A tribe ordinarily has a leader and may have a common ancestor as well as patron deity. “Tribe is taken to donate a primary aggregate of peoples living in primitive or barbarous condition under a headman or chief. And their society is simple, pre-industrial and folk society.”

Imperial Gazetteer defined a tribe as a “collection of families bearing a common territory, and is not usually endogamous though originally it may have been”. According to Encyclopedia of Americana a tribe is “a group of families who have a feeling of community through occupying a common territory and following similar customs”.

As these people form the oldest ethnological sector of the population, some refer to these people by the term ‘Adivasi’ (Dwellers from
the beginning) which means the original inhabitants of the land. However, International Labour Organization has defined them as ‘Indigenous people’.

Majumdar (1961) describes a tribe as “a collection of families or groups bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession and have developed a well assured system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations”.23

The tribe is “a social group of simple kinds, the members of which speaks a common dialect having a single government, act together for common purpose and have a common name, a contiguous territory, a relatively uniform culture or way of life and a tradition of common descendent”.24

Here the tribe is considered as a social group with common dialect, purpose, name and culture. The minimum definition of a tribe as suggested by W.J. Perry (1961) “is a group speaking a common dialect and inhabiting a common territory”.25

Bardhan (1973) defined a tribe as a “course of a socio-cultural entity at a definite historical stage of development. It is a single endogamous community, with a cultural and psychological make-up going back into a
distant historical past." Anthropologists have defined a tribe as social group usually with a definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social action (Chattopadhyaya, 1990).

Crocker described a tribe as "a small, isolated and closely knit society". Similarly a group of British Anthropologists defined tribes as "a politically and socially coherent and autonomous group". Hoebel says that a tribe possesses a distinctive culture that marks it from other tribes.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was greatly impressed by tribal culture. According to him "tribal people possesses a variety of cultures and are in many ways certainly not backward. Thus there is no point in trying to make them a second rate copy of ourselves. Every flower has a right to grow according to its own laws of growth".

The World Council of Indigenous Peoples distinguished the way of life of indigenous peoples from those of the first (Highly Industrialized), Second (Socialist Block) and third (Developing) worlds, that's why indigenous people (Tribals) some time being termed as Forth World. Majid Hussain (1997) defined tribe as "indigenous people who are
strikingly different and diverse in their culture, religion, and social and economic organizations"33

The term Scheduled Tribe has not been defined in the constitution of India. The notion of a tribe in India is determined primarily by political and administrative consideration of uplifting a section of the Indian people which have been relatively remotely situated in the hills and forests and which is backward in terms of the indices of development. The scheduled tribes have been identified in terms of two parameters of relative isolation and backwardness. Sometimes the notion of territoriality has also been applied to incorporate all communities of the remote and backward regions such as Lakshadweep, Jounsar and a part of Ladakh34.

As per the Constitution of India, Scheduled Tribes means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be scheduled Tribes for the purpose of the Constitution.35

The above definitions may not be complete, but combined; they serve a useful purpose in providing a comprehensible picture of the tribals. The characteristics of tribes can be summarized as follows:

➢ The tribals are earliest habitants on the land.
Tribals are conscious of their dialect, cultural homogeneity, social organization and territorial integrity. Each tribal community has a common dialect, though every community has not developed its own language and possesses a culture common to them, though it varies in different regions or localities.

They are disciplined, loyal towards social and political customs, people with self-respect who obey their leader or chieftain.

They have a cult or totem which is valued by each member of the clan.

Generally they lack adaptability and live in isolation; forests or hilly tracts.

Since they have been isolated from the mainstream, the tribals escaped from the humiliation of the caste system.

Types of Tribes

Due to invariable cultural contacts, changes have taken place in the socio-economic life of the tribal communities in India. Majumdar (1961) discusses the impact on the tribal life as a result of cultural contact.
According to him "today most of the tribals come in contact with advanced communities, have learnt traits of their neighbours, have borrowed patterns of their dress and developed an intricate material economy. Some of these tribals have progressed at a tremendous pace effecting in a few years changes which have taken centuries to achieve in other areas." Varrior Elvin (1959) has portrayed this act as those "who under external influence are already on the way to the loss of their tribal culture, religion and social organization".

A special committee headed by Sri L. M. Shrikant, Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Tribes divided tribals into four categories:

1. Tribals
2. Semi Tribals
3. Acculturated Tribals
4. Assimilated Tribals

According to Dube (1972) there are tribes who are "enjoying high social status and political influence." There are two sub groups in this category – the tribal like Rajgonds who have a high social status within the Hindu caste system and the tribes like the Bhil and Naga who represent the old aristocracy of the country. Under the third category, there are the tribes whom The Tribal Welfare Committee of the Indian Conference of Social Work described as acculturated tribal community. These tribes
have migrated to the urban areas and are engaged in industries and other vocations and have adopted and followed the traits and culture of the non-tribal population.40

The impact of Christian missionaries on the tribal cannot be neglected particularly in the North-Eastern States of India where a large number of tribal populations have been converted to Christianity.

The major factors which brought the unprecedented changes in the tribal societies are (a) Forest laws - which was not in favour of tribals residing in forests, and (b) Large scale ‘Displacement’ of the tribal population due to so-called ‘National Development’ in the form of industrialization, mining activities and construction of major dams to harness the water potential in the tribal areas. The combined result of these two factors was large scale migration of the tribals from the forest land and their contact with the non-tribal community.

**Concept of Forest Economy**

The Penguin dictionary of geography defines economy as “a system of production and distribution designed to meet the material needs of a country, region or society. An economy may be described as agricultural,
primitive or industrial etc according to the activities which pre-
dominate"  

On the basis of above definition 'Forest Economy' may be defined as a system of production and distribution in which the basic material needs of a region were fulfilled by activities in which forest produce are dominant.

Agarwala (1985), expressed that "the 'forest based' tribal economy, the agricultural economy, and the urban economy prima facie represent three different stages in human development and each one then has to appreciate the other."

At one stage the tribals were fully based on the 'forest economy'. Gradual transformation in their economy and society resulted in emergence of peasanised form of tribal economy, in which primitive agricultural economy is supported by forest economy, in most of tribal communities of India. As already stated earlier that most of the tribal communities go to the forest for their one needs or the others, however, the primitive tribal communities; mostly living in and around the forest, are heavily dependent on forest economy. In the later chapter we will know the degree of dependency of the primitive tribal community on the forest produce. However, they generally collects dry fuel wood, dry
leaves, fruits, roots of the trees etc for their household consumptions and minor forest produce i.e. Mahua fruits, Tendu fruits, gum, honey and fallen and dry timber etc to sell in the weekly markets to supplement their meager income from agriculture. Some of primitive tribal communities also collect bamboos for basket making. Even the leaves of some of trees also collected for making leaves plates and bowls etc which enable them to get some returns in the weekly markets. Tendu leaves and Mahua fruits are two important minor forest produce through which the tribal gets a handsome income.

There has been an ongoing debate over the management and utilization of the ‘Minor Forest Produce’ and the share of the tribal population! As according one estimate “one-third of revenue, generated from forest in India, comes from selling of Minor Forest Produces”.43

**Concept of Tribal Development**

The concept of tribal development means uplift of the tribal community. Which are at different stage of socio-economic and cultural realms of growth?44 “Sustainable development of tribals depends upon a system of self-development based on their own creative force and
corporate productive resources and plan for development must take forest and land resources as the base".45

Emphasis should be laid on education, economic development, health, nutritional problem, infant and childhood mortality, family planning etc.46 Belshaw - a Sociologist observed that “sociologically speaking, development should be looked upon as an organized activity with the aim of satisfying certain basic needs and to psychologically orient the tribals to adopt new skills, attitudes and life styles, so that they built up the inner strength, and appropriate social and cultural infrastructure to stand the pressure of new situation and accrue benefits from the new programmes and maintain higher levels”.47

According to Mathur (1992) 48 “Social scientists have long pleaded for inclusion of tribal culture in development programmes. Tribal development should be endogamous and from within the system rather imposed from the exterior”.

A number of issues may be suggested particularly in the context of tribal development.

➢ Development includes both quantitative and qualitative change.

➢ Social and cultural aspects of the concerned population should be considered.
➢ Imposition of ideas and values, plans and programmes, and also priorities of work without considering the felt needs of the concerned population should not be made.

➢ Development should promote participation of the concerned population in the development process.

➢ Development should help in the elimination or at least reduction of various process of domination and cultural hegemony of ruling classes, equalization of distribution of development benefits (growth with justice) and redistribution of income.

➢ Development should not only prevent alienation of the tribals over productive resources, it should also not affect the physical environment to any appreciable extent and the traditional customary rights of the tribals over productive resources.

➢ Development should not in any way affect the quality of life, but it is expected to improve it.

**Literature Review**

The literature survey presented here pertains mainly to tribes of India in general and tribes of central India in particular and emphasis has been given to cover the literature on the relationship between tribes and forest, tribal development and the role of forest economy in nurturing the
tribals. The resource base of the tribal economy, the causes and consequences of transformation of the tribal economy, impact of forest policies and the laws on the socio-economic set-up of the tribal community, the impact of low levels of economy in the form of indebtedness and exploitation has all been encompassed. Recommendations and suggestion of various experts, commissions, and committees, regarding role of forest in tribal development, has also been reviewed.

A study conducted by the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad (1977-78) indicated that agricultural production from land is inadequate to maintain a tribal household at subsistence level. The income from labour is erratic. Collection of NTFP, which has been important, was conditioned by availability, marketability, access to the forest and other constraints. Another survey conducted by the Tribal Research and Training Institute, Ahmedabad, regarding the impact of NTFP collection on the Socio-economic life of tribals, has shown that nearly 35 per cent of the earnings of the tribals in the Panchahal district in Gujarat was from NTFP.

Sharma (1978), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India, has closely analyzed the changing relationship of man and forests with respect
to the tribals in India. He concluded that “it is obvious that the development of the tribals and the forests as two co-equal goals are fully compatible and consistent. Certain basic needs of the local communities must provide the solid foundation of the rational utilization of forest. The socio-economic condition of tribal communities should be accepted as an important condition for developing the level of technology and intensity of operations in an area. The plans for tribal development should take the forest resources as one the bases on which tribal economy can progress with confidence.”

On the relationship between forest and tribe, Singh (1982) stated that “forest and land are two important resources for tribes. Of the two forests is the most closely linked with tribal life and culture than land. Forest is home, it is source of food and employment, and it is the abode of sprits. Even those tribal communities who had adopted a peasant system are dependent on forest. A tribal has not become a full peasant yet”.

Similarly Childyal (1982) expressed that “By the vary nature of their habitat and ecology, the tribals depend heavily on forests for their survival, livelihood, occupation and employment.” Until the early decades of the previous century all the tribes were entirely depended on
forest. The United Nation report on tribal development succinctly brings it out and states as fellows:

"Tribal people in general, derive either directly or indirectly a substantial amount of their livelihood from the forests. They subsist on edible leaves and roots, honey, wild game and fish. They build their homes with timbers and bamboos and practice cottage crafts with the help of local raw materials. They use herbs and medicinal plants to cure their diseases and even their religion and folk-lore are woven round the sprits of the forests, trade being left mostly to the outsiders who controlled the money."

In the words of Childyal (1982) "Forest is a source to the tribals not merely in terms of fulfillment of the basic needs and derives but also in regard to livelihood. Besides the game the tribesmen get into forests, the collection and sale of minor forest produce such as dry and fallen wood for fuel, small timber, bamboos, nuts, berries, bones, hides, skins, herbs etc. are a source of income".

In his study, Rizvi (1982) revealed that "Hills Korwa of Surguja (Chhattisgarh) had a deep sense of belonging to the forest and looked upon it as the provider of the means of livelihood. They were masters of the forests and enjoyed considerable freedom to exploit the minor forest
produces. They practiced shifting cultivation (*Beoura*) freely till 1869 which the practice of *beoura* has banned and they were forced to adopt plough cultivation for which neither they possessed the technique nor the will. The forest laws grew more and more stringent leaving nothing but a few timbers and fuel wood for the tribes”.

Agarwala (1985)⁵⁷, a retired I.F.S, also opined the similar view. According to him “the tribal communities have a close relationship with forests. Their customs, tradition, religious practices, social fabric and folklore have greatly been influenced by the forests, particularly for their food, medicinal herbs material to build their houses, fuel for cooking as well as lighting and warmth, and fodder for their cattle. At times of food shortages in particular, they depends greatly on the forests for their sustenance. Even in the normal times the roots, tubers, fruits, and flowers collected from the forests substantially supplement their diet. Tribals enjoy various privileges in respect of cultivation, grazing, collection of fuel wood, collection of minor forest produce, hunting, fishing, etc. in various forests.

Prof. Roy Barman (1997)⁵⁸ in the context of forest and tribes mentioned that “the tribal communities are not only forest-dwellers but also for centuries they have evolved a way of life which on one hand is woven round the forest ecology and forest resources and on the other
ensures that the forest is protected against depredation by men and nature”.

Forest plays an important role in the tribal economy. It not only provides livelihood to hundreds of tribal communities but the only alternative source of sustenance at the time of drought and scarcity. Mukherjee (1997)\textsuperscript{59} termed forest as safety net for the tribals. According to her in the presence of spiraling prices, reduced wages in real terms, unemployment, sickness, and reduced productivity form land, and recurring shortages, forest resources act as a kind of safety net for local communities, protecting them from the harshness of market forces. They come to rescue by providing a safety net against food and livelihood insecurity, drought attacks, pest attacks, illness, pollution etc.”

Firdous (2000)\textsuperscript{60}, in his research work concluded that:

- The tribal household are invariably depends on forests for their one need or the other.
- Most of the tribal households, irrespective of their income level, go to the forest and collect one thing or the others.
- Economic dependence of a tribal group on forest is determined by its present stage of economic development and availability of other (alternate) source of survival.
Some of the primitive tribals groups depend heavily on the forests for their survival, while most of the settled agriculturalist dependence is limited to collection of fuel wood, leaves and timbers.

Tribals generally collects fuel wood, fruits, leaves, for their household consumption minor forest produce and timber to sell in the weekly markets to supplement their meager income.

The tribal population generally lives in hilly regions or forest. They have been far removed from the mainstream of the society. They have always been subjected to neglect and isolation and on account of these they fallen far behind in the march of progress - both, socially and economically. Since education is probably the most effective instrument for ensuring equality of opportunity, tribal people are lagging far behind to their more fortunate fellow countrymen due to lack of education.

On socio-economic development of tribal communities, Reddy (1991)\textsuperscript{61}, in his paper ‘H.R.D in Tribals’, expressed that one of the much neglected sectors of population in the country in this aspect are tribal communities both in terms of modern indicators of human resource development like literacy level, school enrolment figure, at various level,
etc and in providing basic skills in tackling the day to day problems as well as in earning them livelihood.

Srivastava (1990)\textsuperscript{62}, while studying the socio-economic profile of the Kamar tribe of Chhattisgarh, also concluded that "majority of them were illiterate" and asserted that there is immediate need for improvement in this direction.

Panday and Singh (1991)\textsuperscript{63}, while analyzing the socio-economic characteristics of the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh, also came to the same conclusion as far education of the tribal is concerned.

Mohanty (2003)\textsuperscript{64} revealed that "like all other sectors of socio economic life educationally the tribal people are at different level of development but, on the whole, formal education has made very little impact on tribal groups."

Recently, Forest-dwellers tribal communities have given their due right on forest through an act of parliament but the damage was already done and their entire life supporting system corroded and shattered due the British and subsequent Indian government forest policies. Tiwari (1980)\textsuperscript{65}, a senior forest officer in the Ministry of Homes Affairs, has very well summarized that; "the tribal communities could subsist for thousands of years with reasonable standard of health and comfortable abode,
because forests provided them food, shelter and gainful employment. A variety of new forces have arisen in the forest area which disturbed this balance”.

Studies of prevailing resource-utilization patterns of tribal society reveals that most of the animal and plant species usefully utilized by them are either uneconomical or unwanted for technologically advanced societies. The wild plants which are used by the tribals for purposes of medicines, food, fiber, and building material, etc. are being progressively replaced by commercially useful and exotic fast-growing species. In these varied ways, colonial forestry marked an ecological, economic and political watershed in the Indian forest history.

Bhowmick (1981), Srivastava and Chaturvedi (1989), Danda (1990), Fernandes (1990), Reddy (1992), Rao (1996) and others have reviewed the various forest polices in the context of tribal rights and needs and strongly argued that through the different policies government has snatched the traditional rights of tribals.

Singh (1989) opined “that the political objective of all the tribal discontent may be differing but the economic ends is the same- restoration of land and rights in the forests on which they subsist”. 
Fernandes (1990), while reviewing the Forest Policy -1988, concluded that "national needs (the needs of the industry) get priority over those of the people (the requirement of the tribals).

In the view of Gadgil and Guha (1992), "it was the emergence of timber as an important commodity that led to a qualitative change in the patterns of harvesting and the utilization of the forests. Thus, when the colonial state asserted control over woodland, earlier controlled by the local communities, and proceeded to work these forests for commercial timber production, it represented an intervention in the day-to-day life of the Indian villager which was unprecedented in its scope. Second, the colonial states radically redefined property rights, imposing on the forest a system of management and control whose priorities sharply conflicted with earlier systems of local use and controls. Finally one must not underestimate the changes in forest ecology that resulted from this shift in the management systems. Significantly, the species promoted by colonial foresters - teak, pine and deodar in different ecological zone - were invariably of very little use to rural populations while the species they replaced (e.g. oak, terminalia) were intensively used for fuel, fodder, leaf manure and small timber".
Bhandari and Channa (1992) declared that “the national interest of the Indian Government was the same as that of the Colonial Government—the commercial exploitation of the resources”.

In the thickly wooded plateau of Chotanagpur, meanwhile, the commercialization of the forest and restrictions on local use led to a precipitous fall in the population of the Birhor tribe from 2340 in 1911 to 1610 in 1921 (Ehrenfeld 1952; Roy 1925). Baigas of Chhattisgarh, were famed for their hunting skills, also induced a dramatic decline.

The laws caused a serious setback to Hill Korwa economy and reduced their nearly self-sufficient economy to serfdom. Left without any substantial means of livelihood, a part of the tribe assumed criminal propensities as reported (De Brett: 1909).

These aborigines and lords of the forest have become encroachers in their own land. While the rights of tribals have not been recognized, legislations come in the way of their development.

From the time of the British till today the tribals in many areas of the country have rebelled due to many injustices heaped on them. Reddy (1991) accounted that there are as many as 70 tribal insurgency cases so far in the country.
In the reports and recommendations of the experts and various committees and commissions, most of them had favoured involvement and participation of the tribals in the conservation and development of the forests. This includes:

- The Renuka Roy committee (1959) suggested that steps should be taken to introduce a system of guided management where by tribals or their representative bodies get progressively associated with the management and exploitation of forests.

- Elwin committee (1960) recommended that for assuring the tribals “that their rights in forest should be respected and that an entirely new attitude should be taken towards them by forest authorities throughout India. It also suggested that some share of the profits earned from forests should be given back to tribals to convince them that their interests were taken with that of the forests.”

- The commission led by U.N. Dhebar (1961) recommended that “forest department should be deemed to be charged as a part of the Government with the responsibility of participatory in the betterment of the tribals.”

- Report of the committee on ‘Tribal Economy in Forest Areas’ (1967) suggested that “the balancing needs of local population consistently
with the national interests and the replacement of the intermediaries, who exploit both local labour and the forests for their own benefit, would be major steps in solving the tribals problem.”

- Hari Singh committee (1967) observed that “for the tribals living in the forests, the mere subsistence on part-time agriculture and seasonal employment in forest can’t ensure sustenance throughout the year. The best way of diverting the tribals from denuding the forest for the purpose of cultivation is to provide them employment in major and minor forest production harvesting and collection by eliminating contractors. Forest must be managed not basically for profit or only conservation but for furthering tribal interest.”

- The Working Group on Tribal Development during Sixth Plan recommended that “the local tribal community, which has symbiotic relationship with the forest, should be accepted as partners in the forestry development efforts in each area.”

- It envisaged that forest development should be integrated with economic betterment of the tribal population. A people oriented forestry model has been proposed by Sharma (1978) who advocated participatory management of forests and tribals.
The Conference of State Ministers of Forest and Tribal Welfare on the ‘Role of Forest in Tribal Economy’ (1978) recommended that forestry development instead of being planned in isolation should become an integral part of a comprehensive plan for the area in which the needs of local economy should get high priority and consequently influence the choice of species for each area. It had also recommended that the tribals on forest villages should be given heritable and inalienable rights over the land.

The National Seminar on Economic Development of Scheduled Tribes (1979) recommended that “tribals are ecologically adapted to a forest environment; hence their gainful occupation should be in forestry sector.”

Report of the committee on forests and tribes in India (1982) recommended that in forest rich regions (with a forest area of 30% or more) forestry oriented development programmes should be taken up, linking forest development with tribal development. All landless tribals are to be employed in forest activities or forest based industries. Some of the cottage, small and medium forest -based industries should be locally established to generate employment.
Examining the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, the Working Group of the Planning Commission for Eight Five Year Plan felt that the Act comes in the way of developmental programmes of a large number of the tribals, depriving them of basic infrastructural facilities, like roads, dispensaries, schools, etc. It has been suggested that powers needs to be delegated to the local authorities for permitting use of forest land for purposes where component of land requirement is very small. It has also been pointed out that by not recognizing medicinal plants, horticultural species and oil seed as forest use, the act prevented state forest department from planting them for the benefit of the tribals.

The elimination of city based middle man and involving unemployed locals would be two major steps in the right direction (Dutta et. al; 2004).

It is well accepted fact that nature can optimize productivity, but man can maximize productivity under certain instrumental, social and ecological laws (Mishra; 1998).

This is the niche in which Indian forest and forestry will flourish in partnership with people (prabhaker; 1998).

Report of the committee on the ‘ecological role of forest and meeting the development aspirations of the people in and around the forest’
(1990)\(^7\) has incorporated as many as ten survey reports on the "tribal dependence on forest ecosystems", which suggested that some of the forest dwellers tribal communities depends heavily on forest.

The above literature review reveals that no tribal group in India has yet become a full peasant. Even those tribal communities who had adopted peasant system long time ago are dependent on forest. All the experts and scholars have opined that forest is most important sources of livelihood for the tribals and the restrictions imposed upon them on their free access to the forest resources caused a serious setback not only on their economy but on their social set-up as well, particularly to the forest dwellers, left them without any substantial and alternative means of livelihood and reduced their nearly self - sufficient economy to serfdom.

The recommendations and suggestions of various experts and committee's suggested that local people (tribals) must be incorporated in forest development programmes. Forest development and tribal development should be the sides of the same coin. Tribals development should be endogamous and from within the system rather than imposed from the exterior. Inclusion of tribal culture in development programmes of forest area has been loudly voiced.
Endnotes

2. Government of India (1952), Planning Commission, First Five Year Plan
   UNRISD, Report, No.3, Geneva p 7
11. ibid
16. ibid


21. ibid


23. Majumdar, D.N., (1961), Races and Cultures of India, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, p 367


25. Majumdar, D.N., op. cit.


27. Satyanarayana, M.,(1990) Tribal Development in India, Inter-India Publication, New Delhi p 10


29. ibid

30. ibid


32. Hussain, M., (1997), Human Geography, Rawat publication, Jaipur p 364

33. ibid

35. Constitution of India, Article 366.
36. Majumdar, D.N., op. cit. p 369
38. Satyanarayana, M., op. cit.
40. *ibid*
44. George, J. and S.S. Sreekumar, op.cit.
46. *ibid*
49. GOI, Ministry of Environment & Forests (1990), Report of the committee on the “Ecological Role of Forests Forest Protection and Meeting the development Aspirations of the People in and around the Forests, p 90.
50. *ibid*
51. Sharma, B.D., (1978), "Forests, Tribal Economy and Regional Development"
Ministry of Homes Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi


55. Childyal, V.P., (1981), op. cit. p 138


58. Quoted by Debashis Debnath (1997), "Linking Forestry with Tribal Development", Kurukshetra, New Delhi, Jan-Feb., 1997, p 100

59. Mukherjee, Neela (1997), Forest, "Indigenous Communities and Sustainable Development", Kurukshetra, New Delhi, Jan-Feb., 1997, p 14


62. Srivastava, H.C., (1990), "Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of Kamar Tribe of Madhya Pradesh", Man in India, Jan-1990, p 164


66. Childyal, V.P., (1981), op. cit. p 97
75. Famandes, Walter. (1990), op. cit.
76. Gadgil and Guha (1992), op. cit.
78. Quoted by Gadgil and Guha (1992), op. cit.
79. Gadgil and Guha (1992), op. cit.
83. India, report of the study team on “Social Welfare and Welfare of Backward” Classes (Renuka Roy committee), 1959.
84. India, report of the “Committee on Special multipurpose Tribal Block” (Elwin committee), 1960.

85. India, report on the “Scheduled Area and Scheduled Tribes Commission” (Dhebar committee), 1961.

86. India, report of the “Committee on Tribal Economy in Forest Areas” Govt. of India, Deptt. of Social Welfare, New Delhi, 1967.

87. India, report of the committee on “Tribal development and Forests” (Hari Singh Committee), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 1967.


89. Sharma, B.D. (1978), op. cit.


92. India, report of the Committee on Forests and Tribals in India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 1982.


97. GOI, Ministry of Environment & Forests (1990) op. cit. pp 87-92